

REMARKS

Claims 1-47 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 8, 15, 22, 28, 29, 30, and 31 are independent claims. Claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, Second Paragraph, under 35 U.S.C. 102(e), and under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

In the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicants are canceling, without prejudice or disclaimer, Claims 1-21 rejected under either 35 U.S.C. 102(e) or 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Applicant reserves the right to re-file the claims in a continuation application. The 35 U.S.C. 112, Second Paragraph, rejections of the remaining claims as amended are respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Dependent Claims 32-47 are new claims that are either directly or indirectly dependent on independent Claims 28-30, and that are similar to dependent Claims 2-7, 9-13, and 16-20, which have been canceled. Accordingly, the introduction of these new claims introduces no new subject matter.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the examiner for the allowance of Claims 28-30, along with the indication of allowable subject matter, namely, that Claims 22-27 and 31 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, Second Paragraph. Applicants also appreciate the examiner's suggestions toward amending the claims. For the reasons stated below, Claims 22-27 and 31 should be found in condition for allowance.

Objections to the Claims

Claims 22-23, 26, and 28-31 have been objected to by the examiner. Suggested amendments to these claims were provided by the examiner on pages 4-6 of the Office Action.

The examiner suggests to amend the objected claims to recite that "*said switch devices are coupled in a row in the matrix*" and that "*each of said switch devices includes a plurality of fan-in/fan-out devices*" This is not the case, however, because the switch devices may be coupled in multiple rows, not just one row. Further, it is a row of switch devices that includes a plurality of fan-in/fan-out devices, not the individual switch devices. Therefore, the objected

claims have been amended to recite either that *“a row of coupled switch devices in the matrix includes a plurality of fan-in/fan-out devices coupled to output ports of the multistage switch”* or *“a row of a number of the coupled switch devices including at least one fan-in/fan-out device coupled to output ports of the multistage switch.”*

Regarding the examiner's other suggestions, the objected claims have been amended in the manner suggested by the examiner and, therefore, should be found in condition for allowance. Removal of the objections to Claims 22-23, 26, and 28-31 is respectfully requested.

Additionally, because new dependent Claims 32-47 are similar to canceled dependent Claims 2-7, 9-13, and 16-20, the new dependent Claims 32-47 include language suggested by the examiner to overcome the objections of canceled dependent Claims 2-7, 9-13, and 16-20.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 22-27 and 31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, Second Paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding independent Claims 22 and 31, suggested amendments to independent Claims 22 and 31 were provided by the examiner on pages 6-7 of the Office Action. Accordingly, Claims 22 and 31 have been amended in the manner suggested by the examiner and, therefore, should be found in condition for allowance.

Dependent Claims 23-27 were rejected based on the rejection of independent Claim 22 and, therefore, should also be found in condition for allowance.

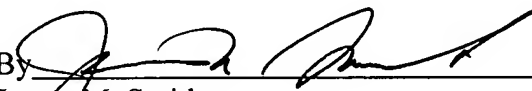
As such, the 35 U.S.C. 112, Second Paragraph, rejections of Claims 22-27 and 31 are believed to be overcome. Accordingly, the present invention as claimed is not believed to be indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Removal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112 and acceptance of Claims 22-27 and 31 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims (Claims 22-47) are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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